THE

RAGGED SCHOOL UNION Magazine.

MAY, 1849.

Original Papers.

SCENES AND SIGHTS IN LONDON.

No. I.

OLD PYE STREET AND DUCK LANE, WESTMINSTER.

In another part of the Magazine, our readers will find an illustration of the above-named locality. Our object has not been so much to give prominence to the Juvenile Refuge, as to exhibit some of the characteristic features of the neighbourhood itself. This would have been done more effectually if taken on a Sabbath afternoon, when the heart of its social life is displayed more fully out of doors. For, to the majority of the inhabitants, each Sabbath-day of their dreary existence, in many respects, may be justly said to be the *worst* of all the seven.

It is, perhaps, difficult to say in what part of the metropolis dark depravity lifts its bold and unblushing head most proudly; or where crime, in its foulest forms, festers most thickly. But we feel assured of this, that there is not one spot in London where the discoveries of science and art, have been brought more fully to aid in the accomplishment of criminality and the perpetration of crime. There is not one spot within its mighty compass, containing a more unmixed source of foul impurity; and, like a loathsome charnel house, casting forth a deadly malaria over the length and breadth of its surface. There is not one spot in which legal punishment, in all its forms, has been more unceasingly at work, and less effective, or from whence prisons and penal settlements have been more thickly populated.

That building, on the front of which you may read "Juvenile Refuge and School of Industry," might long have been designated by its present name. But a few years ago, and it was a *refuge* for *juvenile* thieves, and a *school* in which they were *industriously* trained in the arts of deception and plunder. A part of the process is thus described by an

eye-witness: "Let us look in at the upper room—(now the girls' school.) Here were fifty youths met around their master—as able a one in his calling as England could produce—listening, with undivided attention, to his instructions on the "map," (a pair of trowsers suspended from the ceiling,) on the subject of "fobology," or pocket-picking. After this course of tuition, the next was the mock trial—an imitation of the Old Bailey Court, with a *fac simile* of its functionaries and ordeal, done with very great taste, and calculated to make the young rascal not only expert in extracting from the fob or pocket, but clever in defence. To encourage the young novice in his first essay, he was supplied with a glass of gin below in the tap—(now the dining-room of the children.) If successful, then he returned for the purpose of reporting his success, and having a game at skittles in the skittle-ground—(now the boy's school-room.")

For many years this system of *education* was carried on without molestation, for so desperate were the parties engaged in it that even the police were afraid to interfere. At last they removed to another public-house, a few yards off, now known as "The Working Men's Institute." For a considerable time were the same practices carried on in the new dwelling, until circumstances compelled the landlord to give it up. But although this focus of crime was abandoned, the conduct of these outlaws of society remained unchanged. The streams had run too long and too deep to be so easily dried up. Hundreds of youths are now prowling the streets of the metropolis, who were educated in these nurseries of crime, acquainted with no other means of living than robbery and theft. Groups of them may be seen, in the company of men grown grey in sin, standing about the corners of Duck Lane and Old Pye Street, gambling with the very gold and silver they have stolen from the unsuspecting shopkeeper, or extracted from the pockets of the street passenger. Would you believe it, reader, that some of those ragged fellows may be found sitting beside you in your pew at church, dressed as respectably, and even more fashionably than yourself; and who will watch the opportunity of your departure, to relieve either you or some of your fellow-worshippers of the money you may have in your possession? A friend of ours lately asked a young man if he ever went to church. "I often go," said he; "I prefer going to St. M——'s, because I do most business there."

Many of the private dwellings in the neighbourhood—private at least to the public—are the veriest hotbeds of vice and crime. In some may be found "Mints" in miniature, where parties are engaged in the manufacture of counterfeit coin, which is sold only to known customers, whose living is obtained by giving it currency. In one house—to which there are many parallels—the owner has about fifteen beds,

which he lets to different parties, morning, noon, and night. They are hired for a certain number of hours at a time; by some for the day, others for the night, according to the nature of their vocations. The evening we accompanied our artist to the spot, our attention was particularly directed to one of the inmates of this dingy dwelling. She was a female about eighteen years of age; her countenance bore the most evident marks of hardened, deep depravity. Her pale haggard features seemed to indicate a constitution broken down by a dreadful course of iniquity, to which death would bring a speedy termination. A ragged, barefooted youth, about her own age, had offended her. She pursued him in maddened rage, pouring forth the most awful oaths and threatenings that human lips could utter. Our heart's blood seemed to run cold as we gazed at this youthful victim, standing, as she seemed, on the verge of eternity, her eyes glaring wild in frenzy, with the dread marks of depravity and death blended on her countenance!

Had we inquired into her history, perhaps, like some of her companions in sin, she could have told us, that her father was dead, her two brothers transported, and that before her mother descended to a drunkard's grave, she sold her to a life of shame, and that now she was left to drink out the bitter dregs of that cup of evil, and speedily descend to a premature grave, unpitied and unsaved!

We observed another girl about the same age, sitting on the pavement, but who afterwards became a party in another quarrel. She seemed of a more robust constitution than the former, but given up to a similar course of depravity and guilt. She may live, perhaps, to become the mother of children, such as those we observed wandering in the streets, the embodiments of youthful misery, whose principal clothing seemed a thick covering of filth; and who, from the first days of their existence, had been engaged in a hard and unceasing struggle for life.

It is only a few years since a number of lads, from fourteen to sixteen years of age, hired by their elder companions, might frequently be seen at midday running races along the whole length of Old Pye Street, in a state of entire nudity.

By referring to the small map on another page, our readers will see that within a few minutes' walk of Buckingham Palace and St. James's Palace on the one hand, the residences of the Queen of England and the King of Hanover—within a shorter distance of the Houses of Parliament on the other, and almost under the shadow of Westminster Abbey—the average yearly income of which amounts, at least, to £30,145—these poor unfortunate victims of ignorance and crime were allowed to live and die without pity or care.

There was a time when prisons, treadwheels, and transport-ships, were the only agents at work for the purpose of setting limits to this wide-

spreading evil. No messenger of peace had ever ventured down into these dusky dens, to point their benighted inmates to "purer air and brighter homes above." Not one seed of truth was sown in that barren soil. Not one plough engaged to disturb it. But the briers and thorns of crime and misery struck deep their roots, which can only be eradicated by many years of active toil and labour.

Dark and degraded although many of the inhabitants of this locality still are, perhaps there is no place within the compass of the metropolis where, for the last few years, Christian benevolence has been more actively at work, or its beneficial effects more abundantly manifest. The first public house above-mentioned, where youths were trained for prisons and transportation, has been occupied for upwards of two years by the Committee of the Ragged School Union, as a Juvenile Refuge, where many of the children, formerly trained for evil in that very place, are now learning and loving to do well. Six Day and Sunday-schools are now in active operation in that immediate neighbourhood, attended by upwards of 800 children. The Gospel, carried into many a home of misery, has transformed it into a scene of domestic affection and comfort. The tottering steps of the drunkard have been established on the "Rock of Ages," and youthful feet, that once ran swiftly in the ways of evil, have been turned into the paths of righteousness and peace. The dreary hum of the drunken revel, and the midnight song, have given place to the cheerful melodies of youthful voices chanting the "Songs of Zion."

These happy results have not been achieved but through much patience, and labour, and the endurance of many trials. And why? Because the Christians of England have not done honour to that religion they profess to obey, nor fully appreciated those moral victories it has already gained. Let this once be done—let these efforts meet with support commensurate with their necessity and claims, and the deepest roots of evil may be successfully torn up; the streams of iniquity not only stayed, but rolled back; and debauchery and outrage will speedily give place to active industry, happiness, and peace.

RAGGED SCHOOL MEMORIALS:

THE OLD STABLE.

No. III.

BEFORE the Old Stable was opened, we were in one of the lowest lodging-houses in Westminster, sitting by the bed-side of one who had spent some years in a course of iniquity, pointing her dying eyes to Him who is ready to receive all that come unto Him that they may have life. While the silent tear was stealing down the pallid cheek of this dying, but we trust repenting prodigal, the solemn scene was interrupted by the sudden entrance of four policemen; two of them kept the door, while the others made a strict search under all the beds that were in the room

six in number; neither the chimney nor cupboard escaped their scrutiny. Having failed in the object of their pursuit, we inquired the cause of their visit; they informed us that a man and woman, notorious for begging-letter writing, had followed up, that morning, one of these epistles with so much importunity, as to succeed in obtaining five pounds from a gentleman, under the plea of burying the applicant's wife; unfortunately the pretended deceased wife made her appearance—she was seen by a servant of the gentleman leaving a public-house with a bottle of rum. Information was given to the police, and they were now in close pursuit. This woman, who for years had carried on a system of imposition on the benevolent public, was a widow, and a mother of two boys, at that time of the respective ages of seven and ten years. The man with whom she lived had been a lawyer's clerk; his love of strong drink, and frequent visits to the same public-house, had brought them together; the man's former profession gave him qualifications, of which few in his position could boast, for the work of imposition; his abilities raised him to the highest dignity, for he was styled by the fraternity king of the beggars. We felt a deep solicitude in the welfare of the boys, for they were the very objects for whom the Old Stable was opened. The worthless mother was spoken to; she admitted that education was a good thing, for *whatever* station in life one filled, it was very useful to be able to read and write. It was at once agreed that the boys should be sent to school. "However," said she, "it is but right to let you know that if Jack and myself should be sent to the 'downs'* for a month, the boys must go to the workhouse. She also made an apology for their clothes, as well she might, for the coat of the eldest boy appeared as though it had done faithful service to a man of no ordinary stature before it came into his possession. One sleeve had entirely disappeared; we hinted that buttons would look a little more respectable than having the coat and trowsers tied up with strings. "Bless you," she exclaimed, "you know the boys are so fond of tossing for buttons, that were I to put on wooden ones they would cut them off." They had not been long at school, before it was found necessary to use some means to secure their more regular attendance; the master complained that after all his attempts he could seldom see them in their places; he had sent after them, but to little purpose, for if he had them in the morning, he seldom saw them in the afternoon. He once locked them in the school during the dinner hour, but on his return he found they had made their escape through the roof by removing some tiles. But what could be expected of the poor boys? they had often to provide their own food; this they had no other means of doing than by mud-larking, that is, picking up coals by the river-side, and disposing of them for a few pence. About this time, Jack, the pretended husband of the mother, by a life of dissipation had brought on a disease, which was fast hurrying him to a premature grave. We visited him during his illness, until his death. After the death of this man, the mother of the boys commenced a new mode of living; she opened a wardrobe of widow's weeds, for the purpose of lending them on hire for the day, to those who preferred going out on

* Tothill Fields Prison.

begging excursions; she was also agent for the poor of the neighbourhood, and supplied children at ninepence a head to the professed widows, who found it would answer their purpose to take one or more children, to excite the sympathies of passers-by in the street. In this way, the mother of our young friends now supported herself. We held out promises of rewards to such children as were most regular in their attendance at school, in the shape of clothing, etc. This had the desired effect of securing the attendance of these two much neglected youths; the mother, too, was now in a profession that rendered her less liable to be sent to the "downs," or the boys being removed to the workhouse; which gave them the opportunity of continuing at their classes, until they were capable of going out into the world to do something for their own support. They are now steady young men; the eldest is a plasterer, and the youngest a paper-stainer; both contribute to the support of their mother, whose habits of life are entirely changed. She told us with much feeling, that her boys had agreed together to give her what support they could, on condition of her becoming a member of a Temperance Society. This she at once agreed to do, and still continues a member.

"I CAN'T GET OUT."

BY J. B. SYME.

A BIRD, that had been taught to chant the four monosyllables, "I can't get out," but which never could be taught to comprehend their sense, once sang them in the ears of a sentimental philosopher. The words of themselves are trivial, and the voice which articulated them was but a bird's. They were not the sense-created symbols of a state over which a reflective being mourned; for the "starling" would have repeated the same dolorous lay in the forest, if it had been taught so to do; but, nevertheless, these simple words stirred all the philosopher's soul within him, because they were accidentally expressive of circumstances of sorrow. The bird was in a cage; and flying round its iron-bound sides, it cried, "I can't get out." The sensibilities of the philosopher interpreted the phrase in sorrow. He looked through his tears, and the cage became a prison; he listened with tender compassion, and the voice of the bird became that of a pining, dying captive; and then, impelled by a strong feeling of love, he bought the bird from bondage.

This little incident in the "Sentimental Journey" had been a memory of mine since childhood; until, in my more critical survey of life, it became an analogy. "I can't get out;" oh, I hear it rise, clear and distinct to soul and sense, in ten thousand varied voices; and I sigh for sorrow that it should be so long heard in vain.

The chant of a captive bird is a sad and sorrowful music; for freedom is its life, and the green wood is its home; deprived of these, it has nothing left of its own heritage of nature.

But, brother Christian, sadder and more dolorous, and more startling than the crash of material worlds, is the "I can't get out" that comes up from the darkened depths of an imprisoned soul. An imprisoned soul! Aye, brother, an imprisoned soul! Built up in that tomb that

bears the form of humanity; wrapped up in the cerements of unknown crime, there resides, in the nature of that poor ragged child, a soul that "can't get out."

There are many views which you may take of "Ragged Schools," and each of them is beautiful; but to me the most beautiful is that in which you behold them as the ministers to imprisoned souls. "I can't get out," cries the buried spirit of the poor, ragged child, as the missionary lays his hand upon his brow. The outcast son of misery stands alone in this cold world, without one endearing image, or the memory of one endearment; he starts and stares amazed, as if you spoke an unknown tongue, when you speak to him of home, and kindred, and God, and a Redeemer. No sympathies has he for the beautiful in life, or the beautiful of love, for his spirit "can't get out."

In its deadness and dumbness the appeal of the "ragged child" is more powerful than the eloquence of a thousand tongues. It is immortal life blindfolded, and on the foul, miry path, that leadeth to eternal misery, holding out its trembling hands, and groping, in a God-enlightened world, for some one to put it on the path to heaven. Darkling down in the purlieus of the Minories or Westminster, it "can't get out," until led into the liberty of knowledge in a "Ragged School."

In placing this little captive's foot upon the first step of Jacob's ladder, consists the crowning glory of our Union. The shackles which bound his soul in unconscious sin and Satan's bondage are now felt upon his limbs; and the consciousness of a redemption inspires him with a newborn effort in the path of virtue. The vessel is being prepared for the outpourings of grace. The appeal which the ragged child makes to the Christian is not one of expediency and humanity only, but it is the imperative one of a bondsman asking freedom. The soul of the little thief and beggar, who sees in even the blessed sun an enemy to the life which he leads, cannot be scorned away, when it cries from the deep shadows of its Egyptian night of bondage, "I can't get out." We must hear it, Christian brethren, for its voice is from God, and its destiny is unto everlasting. We must hear it, Christian brethren, for although homeless, friendless, and lost, amongst the crooked alleys of society, it is registered in heaven as immortal, and angels are recording the number of its cries. It is our brother, wailing in a pit for some kind Reuben to "lead him out" to liberty.

In your walks abroad, Christian brother, look down into lowly places, and even though the stigma of crime has branded them with outlawry, you will behold in them beings more precious than the stars. Let your sympathies gush out towards the human weeds that you may find withering in the purlieus of cities, for even in the chief of weeds there is honey. And as you look into the hollow eyes of the little, naked, trembling beggar, who is on his probation of wretchedness, think you see the beseeching of an imprisoned soul—think you hear the wailings of an immortal spirit, that fain would hear of God, and of the Saviour who promised salvation even to the thief upon the cross; think too of the means by which the lost sheep are gathered from the "Slough of Despond," and that in the Ragged School is not heard in vain, the cry of "I can't get out."

MAP OF WESTMINSTER.—The places marked thus ■ are Ragged Schools.

E. KNIGHT SC.

OLD PYE STREET AND DUCK LANE, WESTMINSTER.

FAREWELL MEETING OF FRIENDS AND EMIGRANTS.

The world has ever been slow in acknowledging the debt of gratitude it owes to its best and greatest benefactors. The fruits of their labours have been reaped and enjoyed, while they have often lived and died in obscurity. Small matter this, were it not that their labours of love and mercy are often supported with a sparing hand; their energies are crushed, and their spheres of usefulness narrowed, by the niggardly assistance they receive, in place of that hearty and generous liberality to which their objects and aims are entitled. Not the least of such benefactors are the men and the women who go down into the low haunts of wretchedness and crime, and scatter the seeds of truth and love in the hearts and minds of forlorn and desolate humanity; who take by the hand those unfortunate wanderers, "who have strayed from love and heaven, into a far country of sin and misery, and who have fed with

MAP OF WESTMINSTER.—The places marked thus ■ are Ragged Schools.

swine upon the husks which the birds and beasts have thrown under their forest-tables," and seek to lead them back to virtue and to God. Such men and women are truly "the salt of the earth," not only preserving the good that may remain, but eradicating those dangerous elements that often lurk in the hearts of men, endangering the safety and well-being of society.

We seek not to bestow needless flattery, when we claim a place among the world's most useful labourers, for the humble yet zealous teacher of the destitute children who assemble in the "Old Stable." With a zeal and benevolence which many would do well to imitate, he has pursued his labours in the "Old Stable" for upwards of two years. Not contented with the numbers who daily gathered around him, he has collected from under the arches and bridges, and even stranger places, of the metropolis, a number of those poor wandering outcasts, who could only find in such places a shelter or a home. Never was the oil of human sympathy poured into more hopeless hearts than into the festering wounds of these young and desolate spirits. Some of them had not known the comfort of a bed for years, and others had not had their clothes off for several months at a time; wandering about, homeless and destitute, often living on the garbage they picked up in the streets and market-places, without knowing they had a friend on earth, or a God who pitied them in heaven; but once brought under the care of their kind benefactor, they were not long before they found they had both. He provided them with food and lodging, a large portion of the expense of which has often been defrayed from his own limited income. Nothing can exceed the gratitude and attachment which, in most cases, they bear to their teacher and friend. Many of them have undergone a reformation of character, and some have given evidence of the commencement of a work of grace in the heart. Before returning to rest at night they generally join together in prayer. We have sometimes thought that, surely it was a sight which a pious parent would envy in his own family, to see these poor youths kneeling together in prayer, and one of them earnestly pouring out his supplications in behalf of his benefactor, himself, and companions.

Through the kindness of Lord Ashley and a few friends, three of these youths have been provided with a free passage and outfit to Australia. A meeting, at which his Lordship presided, was held in the "Working Men's Institute," on the 28th of March, for the purpose of committing them, by prayer, to the mercy of God, and affording them an opportunity of bidding farewell to their teachers and friends. The audience consisted chiefly of the parents of children in the neighbourhood, and the elder boys and girls from the Juvenile Refuge and the "Old Stable." His Lordship, in a plain and practical address, enjoined upon the emigrants the duty of honesty and persevering industry, and more especially of gratitude to God, through whose goodness those friends had been raised up who were the means of rescuing them from wretchedness and ruin. He then impressed upon the minds of the parents the solemn responsibility under which they lay, to co-operate with the teachers and others who were striving to rescue their children from that ruinous condition into which many around them had fallen.

They were afterwards addressed by the Rev. Mr. Cowan, Joseph Payne, Esq., and other friends. There were many things associated with this meeting which, to our minds, were both pleasing and hopeful; to see men of rank, education, and influence, assembling in a place—so lately the resort of thieves and robbers—to inculcate upon the minds of the poor and ignorant, the truths of that blessed Gospel, which is the only lever by which fallen humanity can be raised from a state of depravity and vice. Would that such actions were imitated by many of those who are able to do so if they were willing!

The following lines were addressed by Mr. Payne to the emigrants, each of whom was afterwards presented with a printed copy :—

FARE ye well, my brothers three,
Ye will soon have cross'd the sea;
Pleasant fields, and sunny skies,
Then will glad your wondering eyes.

But, while ye delighted look
Upon Nature's open Book—
And in tree, and star, and flower,
Read your Maker's *skill* and *power*:

Ne'er forget His *love*, who gave
Christ, His Son, your souls to save;
And His sufferings keep in view,
Who endur'd the cross for you!

Fare ye well, my Brothers three,
Prayerful, careful, active be;

Strive, through all your lives, to love
Friends around, and God above.

Daily work, with patient zeal,
Neither quarrel, lie, nor steal;
And, I doubt not, ye will stand
Prosperous in a distant land.

And, perhaps, ye may retrace
Ocean's wild and wond'rous space,
And return, with shining store,
To your native land once more!

But, whate'er your lot, I say,
God be with you, night and day:
And, when Earth's last step is trod,
May *you* ever *be with God!*

DEPARTURE OF EMIGRANTS.

Now that nearly all the Emigrants from the Schools have embarked, the following statement may interest our readers, as showing the manner of their distribution. The ship—

*"Labuan"	took out	14	
"Marian"	"	13	
*"Osprey"	"	16	
"Ramilies"	"	13	
*"General Palmer"	"	8	
*"Lord George Bentinck"	"	14	
*"Mary Shepherd"	"	19	
*"Caroline Agnes"	"	11	
"Sir Edward Parry"	took out	16	
*"Saxon"	"	16	
"Eliza"	"	3	
Waiting for a Ship		7	
		150	

which is the total for which the grant was made. The 150 accepted, have been selected from 276 candidates, viz., Boys 134; Girls 16; total 150.

* Those marked with an asterisk went to Port Phillip, and the remainder to Adelaide.

A larger number of girls would have been accepted, but the desire to improve their circumstances, by emigration, was by no means general; had it been so, the majority would have been girls rather than boys. The following are the Schools from which the Emigrants have been sent:—

Streatham Street School	18	Agar Town	12
Phillip Street, Kingsland	7	Dolphin Court	4
Grotto Passage	11	Edward Mews	7
Hinde's Mews	9	Richmond Street	2
Broadway, Westminster	1	New Pye Street	3
John Street	4	Brixton	1
Lamb-and-Flag Court	1	Yeates Court	12
Compton Place	6	Vine Street	2
Brewer's Court	1	Jacob Street	1
Frances Street	5	Union Mews	4
Blackheath	1	Gray's Yard, Calmel	3
Westminster Refuge	3	Jurston Street	4
Grove Lane	4	Neale's Yard	1
Hopkins Street	4	Field Lane	3
Palace Yard	9		1
George Street	6		150

Poetry.

"UNTO THIS WORK YE ARE CALLED!"

BY MRS. E. S. CRAVEN GREEN.

Oh strive ye in your mission zeal, for deeds that should be done,
Fresh wrestlings in life's battle-field and earnest triumphs won;
Wild ocean isles ye need not seek, nor need your footsteps roam
In heathen lands for peril paths—they lie around your home.
In alleys close, and stifling courts, and dens like vermin holes,
Where the leprosy of ignorance eateth up immortal souls,
Where crime sits watching misery's strife, with want, neglect, and pain,
Till call'd to aid it rushes in, hell knoweth, not in vain.
Behold a phantom-shape has past, it haunts thee on thy way,
Look on thy brother's face, oh man! and shudder at delay.
That wither'd, wasted, spectre *child*, gaunt, with its idiot leer,
Its cry already has gone forth, an awful sound of fear,
As mingling with a thousand such it rises to the *throne*,
We shall hear it at the judgment-day, with the wakening trumpet's tone.
The cry of perish'd souls! on earth despised, forgotten long,
Oh, *Avenger* of the *helpless!* wipe away the mighty wrong!
Strengthen Thou the failing, shrinking hearts, the powerful struggler's aid,
Let them now go forth with trusting hope to the work so long delay'd.
Seeking where the nameless outcasts rot in body, and in soul;
Snatching green brands from the burning, and making lepers whole.
Sage and statesman, pen and pencil, in this cause ye must not tire;
Poet, scatter forth thy glowing thoughts, bright arrows tipt with fire;
Maid and matron, high or lowly, aid with woman's loving power,
And the *first prayer* of a ragged child shall be worth an empire's dower.

Leeds, April, 1849.

LABOUR FOR CHRIST.

"I know thy works, and labour, and patience."—Rev. iii.

Go labour on! spend and be spent—
Thy joy to do the Father's will;
It is the way the Master went,
Should not the servant tread it still?

Go labour on! 'tis not for nought,
All earthly loss is heavenly gain!
Men heed thee not, men praise thee not;
The Master praises! what are men?

Go labour on—while it is day,
The long dark night is hastening on;
Speed, speed thy work—up from thy sloth—
It is not thus that souls are won!

See thousands dying at your side,
Your brethren, kindred, friends of home;—
See millions perishing afar,
Haste brethren, to the rescue come!

Toil on, toil on; rebuke, exhort,
Be wise the souls of men to win
Go forth into the world's highway,
Intreat, compel them to come in.

Toil on, toil on; thou soon shalt find
For labour rest, for exile home:
Soon shalt thou hear the Bridegroom's voice—
The midnight peal, "Behold I come."

Bonar.

Correspondence.

To the Editor of the Ragged School Union Magazine.

Dear Sir,—All who have had any experience in the management of Ragged Schools, must fully agree with a statement made in your last number, that one of the greatest difficulties, I would say the greatest, against which we have to contend, is the securing a regular attendance of children; in responding to the invitation given by you, perhaps I may be allowed, as superintendent of one of the largest Ragged Schools in London, to give you a brief sketch of the plan we have adopted, and the results that have followed, and I think you will perceive that a two-fold good is secured. First, the insuring in a very great degree good conduct and attention while at school, and secondly, more regular and punctual attendance.

The plan is simply this: tickets are provided, about an inch and a half square, (smaller would be thought of little value, and more easily lost,) on which is printed "attendance ticket," the name of the school, and a short appropriate passage of Scripture; every teacher is provided with these tickets, which he keeps till the close of the school, and then gives one to each of those children whose conduct has been good, not only in the class, but also during the catechetical exercise or address; when a boy has six tickets, they are exchanged for a larger one of another colour, the possession of one of which entitles the holder to a small eight-paged book, such as are published by the Sunday School Union; or if he presents two of these tickets, he can have one of Watts's Divine and Moral Songs; these tickets are not taken from the children, but a corner is cut off, to signify that a reward has been given for them; we can thus of course tell by the number of tickets a boy has, how far he has been regular in his attendance; and this too, in a great measure, obviates the necessity of keeping a roll-book, a plan though very desirable, yet I fear quite impracticable, in Ragged Schools; but again, the children always have something by them, reminding them of, and connecting them with the school, and if they are looking forward to the annual treat, or tea meeting, they know that in order to share in it they must possess a certain number of these tickets. In the week evening schools the same plan is carried out, with this exception, that the rewards consist of articles of clothing instead of books.

The result in our own schools of holding out these inducements has been satisfactory, though I do not pretend to say that the difficulty is fully met; during the past month, when the numbers in Ragged Schools generally decline, we have had on Sabbath evenings an average attendance of 382; and on week evenings 200; we have also lately established a library; this I feel sure, with good management, will operate as a strong inducement to regularity. The question you have started is certainly a most important one, and I do hope that those superintendents who have adopted any plan which appears likely to meet the difficulty complained of, will not hesitate to give to all engaged in this work the benefit of their experience, Faithfully yours, F. D.

Lambeth, April 10th, 1849.

Editor's Portfolio.

THE VALUE OF ONE EVENING IN SCHOOL.

A LITTLE ragged boy was one day seen loitering near the door of a Sabbath-school. The teacher, with his usual kindness, invited him in, and set him down beside some other little boys like himself. He had never been at a Sabbath-school before, and seemed particularly pleased with the exercises. There was something serious in the aspect of the child, which greatly interested the teacher, as he went on telling him of the blessed Jesus, who came from heaven to earth, and suffered a cruel death, to save such poor little boys as he was, and to take them to heaven to be with himself.

The tidings seemed strangely new to the child, and his young heart was touched. God the Spirit sent the arrow of His word into a sure place, and none were able to pluck it out. The boy asked permission to be a scholar, and for this pupose gave his name and address to the teacher. On the following Sabbath the teacher looked for the little wanderer, but he was not there. Good impressions on young minds are easily effaced, and to this cause he imputed the child's absence. He intended to call and inquire for him during the week, but other cares and duties made it pass from his mind, and it was not till the second Sabbath, when he again missed him, that he remembered the circumstance. On one of the days of that week, however, he was found threading his way through the habitations of the poor, the vile, and the worthless, in search of the home of the little stranger. At last he found it in a miserable attic room, at the top of a long dark stair. He had been accustomed to scenes of misery and wretchedness, but here there was something more than mere want. The room had the appearance of complete desolation, which was rather enhanced than diminished by the presence of a squalid drunken-looking woman, the only living being in the apartment. "Does J—— B—— live here?" said the teacher, as he entered the dark abode of the little boy. She turned round, and pointing to a corner, shrieked out, "Aye—there," evidently with less of sorrow for the child, than a feeling of her own wretchedness at the time. And "there" the teacher turned, and saw, not the beaming, intelligent eye, which had interested him so much a few days before, but his little friend stretched on some straw, a cold and lifeless corpse.

Upon inquiry he found the child had died of fever, caught a few days after the teacher had last seen him. During his illness he had talked frequently of the precious truths he had that night heard at the Sabbath-school, and greatly desired to see the teacher—a desire which either the carelessness or the apathy of his mother had never gratified. Oh, how gratefully would the sick child have welcomed the present visit, had it been a few days sooner! That had been the *first* and *only* time he had ever been at a Sabbath-school—but that short *once* to him how precious! He had received so much of the Gospel as had, we believe, been the means of his conversion.—*Bateman.*

HELP FOR THE HELPLESS.

WE well remember how delighted the poor mother of a large family was when invited to send her children to our ragged school. She said, "Oh! sir, I wish you had come ten years ago. My poor children might have been saved from ruin. I have still two young ones under my control, whom I will be very happy to let you have to instruct." The manner with which these remarks were made, led the writer to inquire into the state of her family. She com-

menced by stating that her husband never seemed happy but when he was in the public-house. "He will do no work if he can only obtain the means to drink. Thus he has gone on for years, while I am obliged to go out to the wash-tub for the support of my family. The children have been entirely neglected by him; two of my boys have grown up, and fallen into a course of crime, for which they have been several times committed to prison, but are now, poor fellows, transported far away, all through neglect." She wept bitterly while she told me that her two eldest daughters, being left, like their brothers, to themselves, without any domestic care, soon followed them in vice, and became women of the streets. Thus the poor mother was left with a young boy and girl, with no other prospect than that which had fallen to their unfortunate brothers and sisters. We at once took them to the school, where they were taught to read, and hear truths, that were made the means of rescuing both these children from certain ruin. The girl, in due time, left her parent's home for a situation as servant, which, to her credit, she filled with satisfaction to her employer, and still continues to do so. More than once this young woman has offered the writer a shilling for the benefit of the funds of the school, which he has refused, as he knew she often found herself with an empty pocket, from giving what she could ill afford to her mother to provide her with bread. Her brother, too, is an honest labouring young man.—*Westminster Past and Present.*

THE RAGGED BOY—THE FAITHFUL SAILOR.

We give the case of a youth whose parents were both engaged in crime, and whose eldest son had been transported fourteen years. The father and mother have both since been transported. This poor orphan boy was taken to the Ragged School, and, after receiving instruction for some time, at his own request was provided with a basket and water-cresses; this, though small and humble in itself, yet furnished him the means of gaining his bread honestly. The writer watched over his onward progress through trials and difficulties for nearly four years, until he left school. He left his basket, which was sometimes filled with cresses, and at other times with herrings, for a situation as errand-boy. The writer ultimately, at his own request, obtained for him a ship, as he had a desire for a seafaring life. While engaged in penning this paper, a fine-looking young sailor called upon the writer, and inquired after his welfare. So altered had our water-cress youth become, that it was not until we were told he was none other than F. C., whose parents were transported, we could recognise him. He showed us his papers, which at once told us that his character stood high and good as a sailor, and bids fair to rise in the profession he now follows. He thanked us for the Bible which was given him, and said that he should ever make it the man of his counsel on sea or land, as the safest chart by which he could steer his course through life.—*Ibid.*

AN ANGEL OF MERCY.

It is said of the saintly George Herbert, the quaint old English Church poet, that once, in a walk to Salisbury, to join a musical party, he saw a poor man with a poorer horse, that was fallen under his load. They were both in distress, and needed present help, which Mr. Herbert perceiving, put off his canonical coat, and helped the poor man to unload, and afterwards to load his horse. The poor man blessed him for it, and he blessed the poor man, and was so like the good Samaritan, that he gave him money to refresh both himself and his horse. Thus he left the poor man; and at his coming to his musical friends at Salisbury, they began to wonder that Mr. George Herbert,

who used to be so trim and clean, came into that company so soiled and discomposed. But he told them the occasion; and when one of the company told him "he had disparaged himself by so dirty an employment," his answer was, "that the thought of what he had done *would prove music to him at midnight*, and that the omission of it would have upbraided and made discord in his conscience whensoever he should pass by that place; for if I be bound to pray for all that be in distress, I am sure that I am bound, so far as it is in my power, to practise what I pray for; and let me tell you, I would not willingly pass one day of my life without comforting a sad soul, or showing mercy; and bless God for this occasion." O how many might have the anxious thoughts which infest often their midnight hour, changed into sweet music, if they would only be more frequently seen with full hands and friendly words in the abodes of poverty and suffering!—These are the places in which to attune one's conscience to midnight harmonies!—*The Christian Treasury*.

Literary Notices.

Juvenile Delinquency; its Causes and Cure. By a COUNTRY MAGISTRATE. Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh and London. 1848.

We have great pleasure in calling the attention of our readers to this most excellent pamphlet. It is, we believe, from the pen of Mr. Sherriff Barclay, of Perth, whose practical acquaintance with the whole subject gives additional value and importance to the statements which he makes. We rejoice to see such men giving to the world the results of their own experience, upon a subject which claims the attention of every respectable member of society. He ascribes the causes of juvenile delinquency to ignorance, destitution, parental neglect, and, in too many cases, the evils of our present system of prison discipline. He shows, by the strongest of all evidence, the pernicious effects of our present criminal code, and the urgent necessity that exists for a complete revision. In speaking of the cure, the author says, "The prominent remedy is the extension of a sound education—the education of the heart as well as head. * * * It is needless to conceal that all attempts at reforming the outward man are unavailing, if the inward mind and soul be left untouched and unelevated. Any other scheme is but to whiten the sepulchre, and leave rottenness within. It is but to prune the branches from the wild grape, to send forth tendrils stronger and more tenacious than before. Ingrafting can alone change the nature of the plant. Ingrafting with Christian grace can alone truly change and reform each unit man, and so elevate and reform the social masses which men, collectively, constitute."

We heartily wish this pamphlet an extensive circulation; it cannot fail to be productive of good.

Steps to the Bible Mine. By ELIZABETH. Second edition. Thomas Nelson, Paternoster Row.

Parents who wish to promote an interest in the study of God's Word in their families, will find in this little volume most valuable assistance.

Gospel Studies. By the late PROFESSOR VINET. Collins, Glasgow & London.

We trust that those who have perused the author's previous work on *Vital Christianity* will speedily put themselves in possession of this volume. We earnestly recommend it, particularly to those whose readings have chiefly been confined to periodical literature. It is eminently calculated, not only to establish the mind in the great truths of the Gospel, but they are brought home to the heart with originality and power.

BOOKS RECEIVED.—*National Education.* By the VICAR OF HARWELL, Berks.—*School Books used in the Christian Union School, Lower Toynton, Lincolnshire. Report of the Perth Ladies' House of Refuge for Destitute Girls; and Annual Report of the Cleveland Ragged School*

Intelligence.

HOPKINS STREET RAGGED SCHOOL.

THE Annual Meeting of this School was held on Wednesday Evening, March 14th, in the Hanover Square Rooms, Captain Trotter, R. A., in the Chair. Prayer was offered by the Rev. Henry Hughes; after which, the Chairman, in addressing the Meeting, said, he considered the Ragged School movement one of vast importance, and that it behoved all to watch its course, and aid it. He thought that the religious aspect of the movement should, of itself, be sufficient to interest all in its success. He read two letters, which had been received from boys belonging to the school, who had emigrated to Australia; both letters were full of expressions of gratitude for the aid they had received.

The Report stated that, during the past year the Committee had taken the premises above those they formerly occupied, by which a very necessary enlargement had been made to the school. The average attendance of children on the evenings set apart for religious instruction, had been 72 boys and 56 girls; and on the other evenings, when secular instruction is imparted, 45 boys and 60 girls. During the cold winter evenings the attendance was often above 200. A very great improvement had taken place among the children, both in attendance and behaviour. Several children had obtained situations, and continued to conduct themselves well. The industrial classes were found to work admirably, and the Government scheme of emigration had acted as a wholesome stimulus to the exertions of the scholars, four of whom had been sent out to Australia. During the year the children had purchased for themselves 32 Bibles, 24 Testaments, and 30 Hymn-books.

The Meeting was addressed by the Rev. Henry Hughes, Rev. John Robinson, Rev. John Branch, and F. Cuthbertson, Esq., of the Ragged School Union.

From the Report, we find that a balance is due to the Treasurer of £30. 15s. 4½d., not one farthing of which will be removed by the collection at the Meeting, which only amounted to £2.10s.

VINE STREET RAGGED SCHOOL.

THE Fourth Annual Meeting of this School was held in the British School-room, Fisher Street, Red Lion Square, on Wednesday Evening, March 14th, Sir William Baynes in the Chair. The Rev. R. W. Overbury opened the meeting with prayer. The Chairman then observed, that he was happy to testify, from experience, what might be expected from Ragged Schools. It was two years since he had first devoted to them some portion of his time and attention, and the results had been highly satisfactory. The Report stated, that the average attendance of children was from 50 to 60. The general conduct of the scholars was improved. The cases of reformation formerly recorded were going on favourably. Two of the children had emigrated to Australia, and others had been sent to situations. The receipts for the year amounted to £21. 0s. 10d., and the expenses to £24. 3s. 7d., leaving a debt of £3. 2s. 9d. The meeting was afterwards addressed by Mr. Gent, Joseph Payne, Esq., the Rev. D. Martin, Mr. J. Anderson, Mr. Penny, the Rev. R. W. Overbury, Mr. Barker, and Mr. Callon.

EDWARD'S MEWS RAGGED SCHOOL.

THE First Annual Meeting of the above School was held on Wednesday, March 21st, at the Literary and Scientific Institute, Edward's Street, Portman Square, the Right Hon. Lord Ashley, M.P., in the Chair. The attendance was very numerous.

The noble Chairman, in opening the proceedings, said, they should not be content with giving these children a certain amount of education, and then turning them loose upon the world to fight the battle of life, in an almost helpless condition, but they should, if possible, adopt such a system as would enable them to make some provision for the children in after life, either by putting them out to a trade, or giving them the power to leave the country as free colonists, and to settle in a land that so much needed their labour. His Lordship strongly recommended the formation of industrial classes, suggesting that if every one in the room would subscribe only a penny a week for the purpose,

two such classes might be formed during the ensuing year in connection with the Edward's Mews School.

The Report adverted to the opposition experienced from the Roman Catholic clergy in the neighbourhood, some of whom had inflicted penances, and even excommunicated those of their flock who sent their children to school. The female school was established in March, 1848; 199 females have been admitted, between the ages of sixteen and fifty-five; thirty of these did not know their letters. The conduct of the boys was at first most refractory, but now they are attentive and orderly; thirty-eight have subscribed for Bibles. The attendance at the infant school is seventy. Six of the elder scholars have emigrated, and two others are accepted.

The Lord Bishop of Cashel moved the adoption of the Report. He expressed his thankfulness for the efforts that were being made for the poor Irish, many of whom came to this country, and were often allowed to remain in the very depths of ignorance and sin. He prayed that God might bless the Committee in all their doings, and that they might experience the truth of what our Lord had said, "It was more blessed to give than to receive." The Rev. R. H. Herschell gave instances of the good resulting from his own efforts in behalf of those who were once considered beyond the reach of religious influence; he urged upon all those who were interested in the spread of the Gospel to propagate it in the alleys and lanes of the metropolis, where our Lord himself would have gone were he now here.

The Rev. A. Deallas contrasted the state, refinement, and education of the inhabitants of Portman Square, Grosvenor Square, and other wealthy localities, with the wretchedness and vice to be seen among the inhabitants of the streets and alleys immediately behind them. Those of the wealthy who were disposed to be incredulous as to the condition of many of the poorer classes, had but to walk through a neighbouring street, or lane, and examine the state of its inhabitants, to have all their incredulity dissipated.

The Meeting was afterwards addressed by the Rev. H. H. Beamish, Mr. Emery, and Mr. Locke, in speeches of practical interest.

CITY OF LONDON RAGGED SCHOOLS.

A Public Meeting was held on Thursday, March 22nd, in the Hall of Commerce, on behalf of the Long Alley Ragged School, Samuel Gurney, Esq., in the Chair. In opening the proceedings, he briefly expressed his sympathy with the Ragged School movement, and the cause of education generally.

H. E. Gurney, Esq., moved the first Resolution, seconded by the Rev. W. Charlesworth.

Thomas Beggs, Esq., alluded to the various sources of juvenile depravity, especially noticing the crime of intemperance, without the removal of which, he contended, comparatively little good could be accomplished.

Mr. Charles Gilpin made some important statements regarding the amount of degradation and ignorance among the vagrant juvenile population, and its effects on society; and urged the necessity of making every effort to ward off the evil. The only way to obviate the monster evil was to make education easily accessible to the poorer classes; to spread schools in all directions; to implant right principles, habits of industry, and the blessings of civilization. Let them do this, and they would raise these children to something holier and higher than anything to which they had been accustomed; and verily in the end they would have their reward.

The Rev. Hugh Allen bore testimony to the good conduct of the children belonging to a Ragged School, who attended his church, and to the good effects produced on them by the instructions they had received.

D. W. Wire, Esq., adverted to the number of prisons in and about the metropolis, and the large amount of expense incurred by this country in the suppression of crime. The annual expense, he said, for this purpose, amounted to nine millions sterling. How much better would it be to spend one million on Ragged Schools, and prevent the evil which all their expenditure could not cure.

Francis Bennoch, Esq., said, that twenty shillings a year would educate a child according to the Ragged School system, and if every one would contrive to raise this sum all the poor children would be educated, and a great saving effected in the present enormous expenditure.

Mr. Bateman and Mr. Green urged upon the Meeting the necessity of assisting in the removal of a debt of £200,

incurred by the Committee in fitting-up the school.

The Chairman promised that if £150, out of the £200, be collected by the 30th of June, he would pay the odd fifty.

SPICER STREET SCHOOLS, SPITALFIELDS. THE First Public Meeting was held in the British School Rooms, Bishopsgate Street Chapel, on Friday Evening, March 23rd. Thomas Fowell Buxton, Esq., in the Chair. We regret to state that the Meeting was thinly attended. The school was first opened by the City Missionary of the district, who gathered together a few children from the streets and railway arches, where they assembled on the Sabbath for gambling, and other such practices. Since then it has become a most important field of labour for the moral and social advancement of the children. An Infant Day School is in operation, with an attendance of 130 children. On Monday and Tuesday evenings, secular instruction is imparted to about seventy other children, above ten years of age, who are prevented by their various occupations from attending during the day. The Sabbath School formed by far the most arduous and extensive field for exertion, and clearly proved the eagerness of the poor to avail themselves of opportunities of raising themselves from a state of ignorance and crime. The Committee are desirous of making still further improvements for the more efficient working of the school, but are hindered for the want of funds. The Meeting was addressed by the Rev. John Robinson, of the City Mission, Mr. Young, the Rev. J. Weir, Mr. Gent, Rev. W. Tyler, and Mr. Miller.

The amount of local aid rendered to the School has only been £35, which leaves the Committee nearly an equal sum in debt. We trust the public will see the necessity of rendering more liberal assistance to an effort calculated to be productive of so much good.

BERE STREET RAGGED SCHOOLS. THE First Annual Meeting of these Schools was held in the St. James's Sunday School, White Horse Street, Ratcliff, on the 15th of March. Lord Ashley in the Chair.

A hymn having been sung, prayer was offered up, and a letter of apology, for non-attendance, from Mr. Champneys, read; the noble Chairman then opened the proceedings by remarking, that he was there, in common with his auditory, to do his best towards the removal of the greatest evil that ever disgraced the world. The Ragged School movement appeared to him peculiarly adapted to the exigencies of the case; and it appeared to him that the fact, that the movement was being agitated almost simultaneously over the greater part of England, seemed to him to prove his position that it was peculiarly adapted to the necessities of the time. But to extract from that movement the greatest amount of benefit it was capable of yielding, those Ragged Schools must be brought to something like a perfect organisation, so that those poor children might not merely be raised, in the first instance, from the streets, and then allowed to sink to the same level again, but so to train them for future acceptance of modes of gaining a livelihood, that they might be ultimately *prevented* from returning to those scenes of vice and misery in which they had been reared. Every one of these schools should have industrial classes established; and during some portion of every day, each of the children brought into the school should have opportunities of acquiring, not merely a knowledge of some trade, but also the habit of industrious application. He strongly advocated the establishment of industrial classes, on the ground that any future grants government might make to assist in enabling lads, trained in the Ragged Schools, to emigrate, a higher standard would be fixed; and therefore if those children were to participate in that benefit, they must be trained to the highest possible degree.

The Report stated that the School was open four evenings in the week, and that the combined efforts of voluntary and paid teachers were gradually producing most important results. An industrial class for girls was conducted by ladies, on the afternoons of Tuesday and Friday. Six of these children have been enabled to go to service. A Saving Fund has been established, in which the children have deposited £1. 17*s.* 7½*d.*, chiefly in farthings and halfpence.

The Meeting was afterwards addressed by G. F. Young, Esq., the Rev. W. Arthur, Rev. Hugh Allen, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Gent, and the Rev. R. F. Spencer, LL.D.

The Collection (including donation of £5, from G. F. Young, Esq.) amounted to £18. 17*s.* 5½*d.*

DUMFRIES AND MAXWELL TOWN EDUCATION SOCIETY.

THIS Society has a twofold object in view, *i.e.*, the establishment of a refuge for juvenile thieves and mendicants, and also to provide free education for children whose parents are unable to pay for it. At a meeting recently held, the following statement was made by A. M'Neel-Caird, Esq., Procurator-Fiscal of Wigtonshire:—"I have looked with some anxiety for any concomitant symptoms which might indicate the origin of the disease, and help us in the application of a remedy. Fortunately there are tables included in the Parliamentary returns by which we can ascertain the state of education among criminals, and we may thus arrive at some very suggestive results. The tables show several classes—1. Those who can neither read nor write. 2. Those who can do so only imperfectly; and, for the purposes of this inquiry, we may, I think, throw these two into one, being all of inferior education. Next there are those who can read and write well; and last, those of education superior to mere reading and writing. Here then are the results:—

Education, 1846.	Dumfries.	Ayr.	Edinburgh.	Lanark.	All Scotland.	England and Wales.
Inferior .	172	92	598	615	3323	22,640
Read and write well	8	34	27	112	665	1,936
Superior .	1	3	2	16	70	85

And, on the average of eight years ending in 1844, the proportions per cent. in England and Wales were—

Inferior education	88 7/10
Read and write well . . .	8 3/10
Superior	
Not ascertained	2

Of persons taken into custody by the Metropolitan police there were—

	1842.	1846.
Of inferior education	58,679	57,693
Read and write well .	6,464	4,632
Superior to ditto . .	561	509

Of convicted criminals in Dublin there were—

	1840	1841	1842	1843	1844	1845	1846
Of inferior education	1614	1161	1057	762	769	710	992
Read and write well	50	41	25	32	25	18	24
Superior to do.	0	1	2	3	1	1	5

And now I think you will be prepared to agree with me, that we have an alarming moral disease to struggle with, and, as its concurring symptom, an enormous extent of ignorance. For the ignorance which is shown in these tables obviously implies and represents a fearful destitution of all profitable knowledge. For example, we may take an interesting inquiry which was made into the extent of ignorance among prisoners in the County of Lancaster. There were found 41 per cent. ignorant of the Saviour's name, and unable to repeat the Lord's prayer; but 42 per cent. who were familiar with the history of Jack Sheppard and Dick Turpin; 50 per cent. who could not name the months of the year; 40 per cent. who did not know even the Sovereign's name; and 20 per cent. who could not count one hundred It would be Utopian to prescribe any single panacea for such a complicated disorder. But I will say, that if you would prevent its farther spread, and gradually remove the elements that foster it, you must inoculate the people with knowledge—knowledge of the work which God hath sent them on earth to do—knowledge of the word which He has given to guide them—the word which He sent by His messengers of old, if we would only listen to their voice—the word which He has written on the heart of man, if man would only read it there—the word which He has inscribed on the book of nature, if man did not shut his eyes that he might not see it there—the word which He has engraven in still nobler characters on those universal laws which He has established, alike to rule the celestial bodies in their courses, and to determine the position of the minutest atom in the universe. There is a sublime simplicity in God's system—a law of universal attraction for the physical creation—a law of universal love for the moral universe. And in the play of the affections, each revolving around some special objects, and attracting them in turn, yet ever having reference to Him, there is a grandeur of analogy that we seek in vain in the conceptions of men. Nor is there any philosophy so profound as that which God has given us—that we must work by love rather than by fear—that we must operate on the heart, if we would effectually reform the life—and that we must train up a child in the way in which he should go, if, when he is old, we would not have him to depart from it.